

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The scout platoon is organized, equipped, and trained to conduct reconnaissance and security for its parent unit. It provides current battlefield information to help the commander plan and conduct tactical operations. It serves as the commander’s eyes and ears on the battlefield. Although the platoon has antitank (AT) capability, it cannot perform its scouting roles when employed as an AT force.

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Section I. ORGANIZATION

The two most prominent scout platoons in the force are the CFV scout platoon and the HMMWV scout platoon. Both of these platoons consist of an officer and 29 enlisted soldiers. The platoons are organized by tables of organization and equipment (TOE) into a headquarters element and two or four scout sections (see [Figures 1-1](#) and [1-2](#) on page 1-2). When executing missions, the platoon is organized according to the factors of mission, enemy, terrain (and weather), troops, and time available (METT-T) into an appropriate tactical organization consisting of a variable number of scout teams.

The CFV platoon is equipped with six M3 CFVs. It is found only in the cavalry squadrons of an armored or mechanized division or in an armored cavalry regiment. The HMMWV platoon is equipped with 10 MI025/1026 HMMWVs. It is found in light cavalry regiments, in air cavalry and reconnaissance squadrons, and in mechanized infantry and armor battalions.

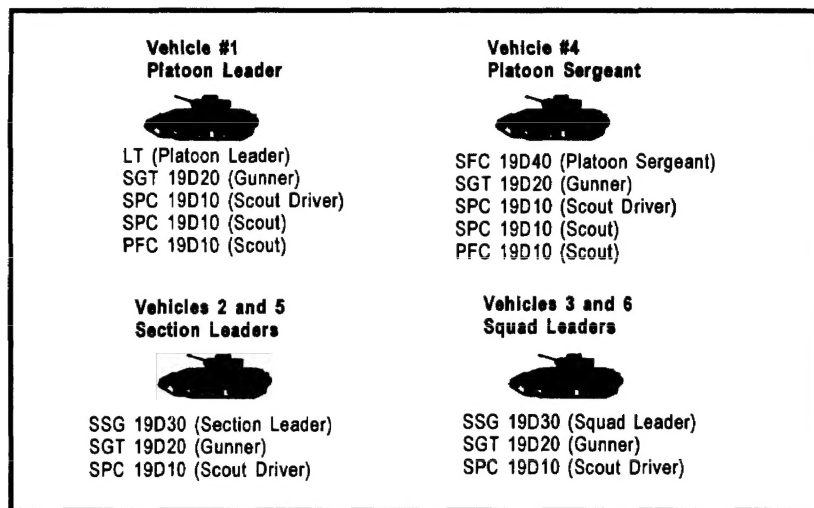


Figure 1-1. CFV scout platoon.

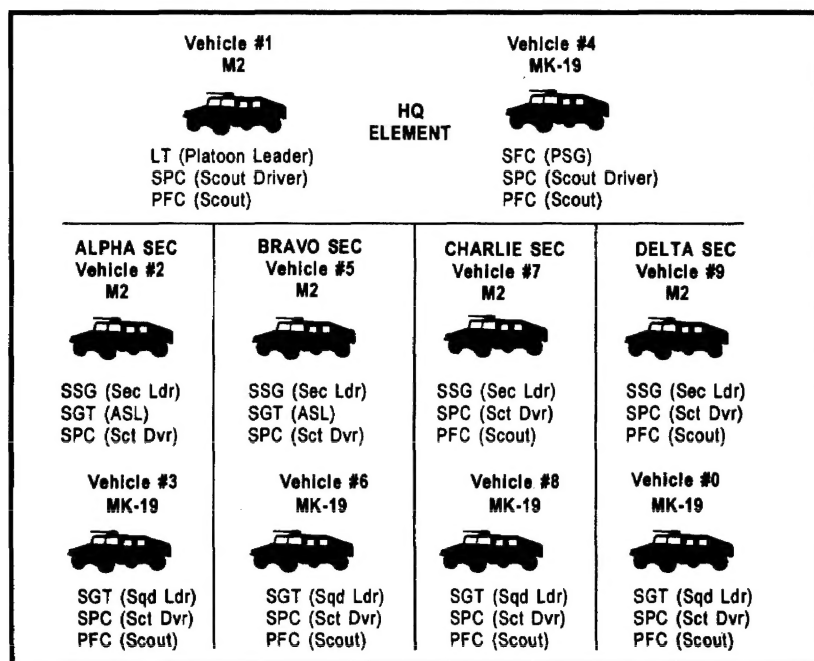


Figure 1-2. HMMWV scout platoon.

PLATOON HEADQUARTERS

The platoon headquarters element provides command and control for the scout platoon. It consists of the platoon leader, the platoon sergeant (PSG), and their respective vehicle crews. The CFV scout platoon rarely uses a headquarters element during tactical operations. The HMMWV scout platoon normally employs a headquarters element, but it usually is split into two subelements (platoon leader and PSG) and travels with scout teams for security.

SCOUT SECTIONS

Each scout section is made up of a section leader, squad leaders, and their crews manning two CFVs or HMMWVs. The section is not normally used as a tactical maneuver organization; rather, it is task organized into scout "teams" for maneuver (see [Section VI of Chapter 2](#) for a discussion of tactical organization).

Section II. RESPONSIBILITIES

The platoon leader and noncommissioned officers (NCO) must be experts in the use of organic weapons, indirect fires, land navigation, supporting fires, demolitions, obstacles, communications, and reconnaissance and security techniques. They must be familiar with armor and infantry tactics and be able to react to rapidly changing situations. Because of the many missions the platoon must be capable of performing, the scout platoon leader and PSG must be proficient in all levels of MOS 19D tasks.

PLATOON LEADER

The platoon leader is responsible to the commander for the discipline, combat readiness, and training of the platoon as well as the maintenance of its equipment. The platoon leader must have a thorough knowledge of reconnaissance and security tactics. In the battalion scout platoon, as the task force's expert on reconnaissance and security, he works closely with the commander, S2, and S3 throughout the planning process. The platoon leader must be proficient in the tactical employment of the platoon. A solid understanding of troop-leading procedures and the ability to apply them quickly and efficiently in the field are essential. The platoon leader must also know the capabilities and limitations of the platoon's personnel and equipment. He must be an expert in enemy organizations, doctrine, and equipment. Most of all, the platoon leader must be versatile, able to exercise sound judgment and make good, quick decisions based on his commander's intent and the tactical situation.

PLATOON SERGEANT

The PSG leads elements of the platoon as directed by the platoon leader and assumes command of the platoon in the absence of the platoon leader. During tactical operations, he may assist in the control of the platoon. The PSG assists the platoon leader in maintaining discipline, as well as in training and controlling the platoon. He supervises equipment maintenance, supply, and other combat service support (CSS) matters.

SECTION AND SQUAD LEADERS

Section leaders are responsible to the platoon leader for the training and discipline of their sections. They are also responsible for the tactical employment and control of the scout teams. They are responsible for the maintenance and operation of all vehicles and equipment organic to their sections. Squad leaders have the same responsibilities for their squads as section leaders have for their sections. Section leaders normally assume the role of scout team leaders during tactical operations.

Section III. MISSIONS, CAPABILITIES, AND LIMITATIONS

MISSIONS

The scout platoon's primary missions are reconnaissance and security in support of its parent unit. It can perform its missions mounted or dismounted, day or night, in various terrain conditions, and under all weather and visibility conditions. In addition to its primary missions, the scout platoon can—

- Conduct liaison.
- Perform quartermaster duties.
- Provide traffic control.
- Conduct chemical detection and radiological survey and monitoring operations as part of a nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) defense.
- Conduct limited pioneer and demolition work.
- Participate in area security.

CAPABILITIES AND LIMITATIONS

The scout platoon is a reconnaissance force that conducts operations as part of a larger combined arms force. Scouts in general have limitations and capabilities that must be considered when employing them; each type of scout platoon has characteristics specific to its TOE.

General Organizational Characteristics

Characteristics of the two types of scout platoon include the following:

- The scout platoon is dependent on its parent unit for combat support (CS) and CSS augmentation.
- The CFV scout platoon normally reconnoiters only a single route during route reconnaissance,
- The HMMWV scout platoon can reconnoiter up to two routes simultaneously (reconnoitering for trafficability only).
- The scout platoon reconnoiters a zone 3 to 5 kilometers wide. METT-T conditions may increase or decrease the size of the zone for either type of platoon.
- During screening operations, all scout platoons are limited in their ability to destroy or repel enemy reconnaissance units.
- The CFV scout platoon can man up to six observation posts (OP) for short durations (under 12 hours) or three OPs for long durations (over 12 hours).
- The HMMWV scout platoon can man up to eight OPs for short durations or up to three OPs for long durations.
- When properly organized, scouts can conduct effective reconnaissance and security patrols. The HMMWV scout platoon has a very limited dismounted capability. It must be carefully task organized to conduct dismounted operations. The CFV scout platoon has 12 dedicated dismounted scouts.
- The distance the scouts can operate away from the main body is restricted to the range of communications and the range of supporting indirect fire.

- Scout platoon leaders cannot operate continuously on all necessary battalion nets (battalion command, OI, A/L, mortar) while operating on the platoon net. The platoon leader can monitor only two nets at one time (see [Figure 2-16](#), page 2-36 and [Figure 2-17](#), page 2-38).
- The scout platoon has limited obstacle creation ability and carries a basic load of demolitions.
- The scout platoon has very limited obstacle breaching capability (limited to hasty point obstacles).

Platform-Specific Characteristics

To some degree, the scout's capability is dependent on his equipment. The two types of scout platforms, the M3 CFV and the M1025/1026 HMMWV, have distinctly different characteristics. Both vehicles, when employed with the appropriate tactics, techniques, and procedures, are effective reconnaissance and security platforms. The scout must understand his mount, maximize its capabilities, and minimize its limitations (see Figures 1-3 and [1-4](#)). Refer to [Appendix F](#) for information about future technological developments that will upgrade scout vehicle capabilities.

M3A2 CFV		HMMWV
3,750 m (TOW); 2,500 m (25-mm)	WEAPONS RANGE	1,500 m (CAL .50); 2,200 m (MK-19)
Can defeat tanks with TOW; can defeat light armor	WEAPONS CAPABILITY	Can suppress light armor
More than 3,750 m	THERMAL SIGHT CAPABILITY	3,000 to 4,000 m (system-dependent)
Can protect against 30-mm (direct fire) and 155-mm (near miss) rounds	ARMOR PROTECTION	None

Figure 1-3. Scout platform weapons, optics, and armor.

M3A2 CFV		HMMWV
EXCELLENT	OFF-ROAD MOBILITY	FAIR
FAIR	ON-ROAD MOBILITY	EXCELLENT
GOOD	NIGHT MOBILITY	POOR
POOR	ACOUSTIC SIGNATURE	GOOD
POOR	PHYSICAL SIGNATURE	GOOD
GOOD	PERSONNEL CAPACITY	POOR
GOOD	HAUL CAPACITY	POOR
POOR	THERMAL SIGNATURE	GOOD
GOOD	FORDING CAPABILITY	FAIR

Figure 1-4. Scout platform mobility, signature, and capacity.